

The War Paper for Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

VOL. IX. (Fourth Series) No. 418.

AUGUST, 1916.

Price 1d. Monthly (Post Free)

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DEDICATION

To the brave women who to-day are fighting for freedom: to the noble women who all down the ages kept the flag flying and looked forward to this day without seeing it: to all women all over the world, of whatever race, or creed, or calling, whether they be with us or against us in this fight, we dedicate this paper.

THE OUTLOOK

As we went to press the greatest battle of the war was raging on the Western front. In the House of Commons the Prime Minister was moving the largest Vote of Credit—£450,000,000—ever asked for in the history of this country, a demand following upon Mr. McKenna's announcement, on July 17, that the war is now costing this country nearly six millions a day, just double the amount expended a year ago. We do not dream of comparing the two gigantic prices paid for waging the most devastating war within the knowledge of man. We do not think any comparison can be made between the price that is paid in gold and the price that is paid in human flesh and blood. The awful anguish and desolation of thousands of homes, implied in the tragic daily lists of casualties, spell a sum of suffering and endurance which seems to wipe out all lesser things and to leave us conscious only of the great truth that men and women, who have to bear a common burden of such magnitude, must find a common road to salvation. Only by looking forward to a healing scheme of reconstruction, in which women must play an equal part with men, can the present appalling destruction and waste be endured.

The Registration Fiasco

The long-expected statement of the Prime Minister on Registration turned out to be a mere confession of failure—a proposal to appoint a Select Committee of the House of Commons, who should take over the responsibility from the Cabinet of finding a way out of the difficulty, which the Government themselves had been unable to find! The House of Commons, however, declined to accept the greatness that it was proposed to thrust upon them; and, after a heated debate on July 19, Mr. Asquith withdrew the Government motion and once more undertook to arrive at a solution within the Cabinet ranks. We confess that we find it difficult not to agree with *Punch's* version of the Prime Minister's favourite saying, "Wait, and you won't see!" But our views on the whole situation will be found on pp. 187 and 188.

The Old Worker's Reward

The Prime Minister still refuses a day for dis-

cussion of Old Age Pensions. At the very lowest estimate the purchasing value of the five shilling pension has now fallen to three-and-ninence. But the two years of war have raised the average of food prices alone by 61 per cent., and we may be sure that the greater part of all old people's pensions goes in food. The five shillings are, therefore, worth less to them now than three shillings before the war. Probably it does not buy more than half-a-crown in the things they want. Yet Mr. Asquith and Mr. McKenna sternly reject the proposal to increase the pension to a nominal 7s. 6d., and reduce the age of old pensioners from 70 to 65. They calculate it would cost the country over £5,000,000—nearly as much as one day's war!—and they really do not know where the money is to come from. Australia, which gives Old Age Pensions of 10s. a week to its workers at the age of 65 (women at 60), can find the money. But then, Australia is governed by women as well as men. So is New Zealand, where, in 1898, Old Age Pensions first originated, and where the age is reduced to 60 and 55 respectively if the pensioner has two children under fourteen.

How the Old May Live

In answer to Mr. Hogge, on July 17, Mr. Asquith gave it as his opinion that the increase of Old Age Pensions was "not at all an improper object for which to appeal to the generosity of the public." In answer to a deputation from the Trade Union Congress on July 19, he further said that the Government would continue the full pension of 5s. even though the worker returned to his labour, provided he or she did not make over 30s. in towns or 20s. in the country. So now we may expect a "flag day" for our worn-out working people, while at the same time we see old men and women pathetically trying to take up the work of other days in the hope of living a few more years without starvation. Otherwise they will be driven to the workhouse, where they will cost us 14s. a week instead of the extra 2s. 6d. they claim. Great is Government economy, and will prevail!

The Persistence of Cant

One of the worst effects of the subjection of any class in a community is the opening it appears to give to otherwise well-meaning and fair-minded people to make sweeping statements about that class as a whole, which have no foundation in fact. Writing to the *Times* on July 13, Dr. Horton, a good Suffragist from whom we should not have expected one of these half-truths in connection with women, says in the course of an admirable letter on the national costliness of alcoholism:—

The infant mortality has gone up 5 per cent. in 1915, and the sorrowful explanation is that women's drinking has gone up owing to increased wages and the separation allowances. With the drain on our young manhood which the war exacts, the loss of infants is a disastrous menace to the future of the country.

Similarly, at the National Economy Exhibition, Dr. R. Murray Leslie advocated, in the course of a lecture on "Child Wastage," that the State control of alcohol should continue after the war so as to check consumption of alcohol among women.

Blaming the Woman

Have not these gentlemen read the Report of the Special Committee appointed to inquire into the alleged increase of drink among women? The Report expressly says that the increase, when found, is among women who drank before the war, and that the Committee received no evidence to show that women had taken to drinking to excess in numbers on account of the receipt of allowances; though there was "much evidence of improvement in the homes and in the condition of the children." And apart from the rise in the cost of living, it is absurd to talk as if the separation allowance were assessable to super-tax. But perhaps the best answer to those who may still think that babies die only because of the failings and misdeeds of their mothers is to be found in the pathetic comment of the county medical officer of health on the increase (from 73 to 95 per 1,000) in the infant mortality rate of Northamptonshire, which he ascribes to "the mental distress caused by the war to expectant mothers."

The Future of Our Children

We sometimes wish that the energy of those who blame the mothers so readily for the high rate of infant mortality could be diverted into the more useful channel of improving the conditions of life for those babies who do struggle through to childhood. The condition of the boy munition workers at Woolwich, of whom there are nearly ten thousand over fourteen and under eighteen, was recently described by a correspondent in the *Nation*, who drew a picture of wastage of national material which even threw into the shade all that we knew of boys in blind-alley occupations before the War. The education debates lately held in the Commons and the Lords revealed such facts as that 50 per cent. of the boys of school age are at work in some counties, mostly doing work that women could do better, and that the usual army of 500,000 child-workers under fourteen has been swollen by 15,750 of both sexes, who have been drafted on to the land. "The Government," said Mr. Asquith in the House on July 10, "are engaged in a comprehensive review of the system of education as a whole." We can safely say at the outset that in a country where no woman has an atom of political power, reviews of educational systems will be so much waste-paper.

"The Servile Wage"

One of Mr. Lloyd George's last acts in leaving the Ministry of Munitions for the War Office was to issue the Order (No. 447) which he promised ten months ago. It lays down the rate of wages for women and girls on munition work. When working by time they are to receive 4½d. an hour (25s. a week) if they are over eighteen; between seventeen and eighteen they receive 4d. an hour; between sixteen and seventeen, 3½d.; and under sixteen, 3d. This Order may help to prevent the extreme of sweating, but employers are only too likely to choose the younger classes of girls, who in most cases can probably turn out as much work as the elder, and thus wear out the generation before its time. It must further be observed that these rates are not "minimum" rates, but fixed and

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unalterable wages above which the women workers cannot hope to rise, except in very few special cases. In commenting upon the Order, the *New Statesman* is, therefore, justified in comparing it to "the servile fixing of wages by the magistrates during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." For it must be remembered that the women or girls cannot leave their factory to seek work elsewhere.

Tied Down!

The disability is laid down by the Act, and its result is shown by a case which came up before the Manchester Local Munitions Tribunal on July 19. We quote the report from the *Manchester Guardian*:-

A young girl claimed a leaving certificate on the ground that her work amongst nitric acid and spirits of salt was injurious to her health. The application was refused, the employers satisfying the Tribunal that the girl only wanted to undertake similar work under another firm at higher wages.

As regards piece rates, the Order fixes a minimum rate of only 4½d. an hour, and only in certain establishments, the list of which is not published. It will be remembered that Mr. Lloyd George promised women on piece work should be paid at the same rate as men, provided the work was exactly the same—an easy provision for employers to escape.

Women and the Medical Profession

The importance of medical women is daily becoming more widely recognised. The War Office, which has had the opportunity of testing their capabilities in the military hospital at Endell Street, which is entirely staffed by women doctors under the command of Dr. L. Garrett Anderson, has now appealed for more medical women to work in Regular Army hospitals; and forty have been appointed, some of whom are to go to Malta. This need for their services accentuates the disabilities under which women doctors still labour in this country; and it is satisfactory to read the report that Edinburgh University and King's College (University of London) have decided to open their doors to women medical students, and that women are also to be admitted to the medical school and the wards of Charing Cross Hospital, which thus comes into line with St. Mary's, Paddington, and St. George's, both thrown open to women as a war emergency, and also with the Royal Free Hospital, which was sufficiently enlightened long ago to make this innovation without waiting for a European War. Since we last went to press, the new South London Hospital for Women, staffed entirely by women, has been opened by Queen Mary.

New Women Citizens and Their Vote

Owing to the War, the Danish elections have been postponed; so the newly-enfranchised women of Denmark will not exercise their votes immediately. But the influence of their recent acquisition of political power is already apparent in the programmes of the three principal political parties. The Conservative Party confines itself to a general statement of support for women's efforts to secure their full independence and also juridical equality with men. The Moderate Party advocates the full equality of woman with man in the family, society and the State, and also in respect to economic rights, and rights over children. The Radical Party demands the admission of women to all State and municipal offices, on equal terms with men; equal pay for equal work; equal guardianship and parental control of children; and the adoption of the principle that the disposal of the common property should not of necessity be in the hands of the husband only. This eagerness to recognise the equality of women with men in the State, expressed even before women have had time to use their votes, is enough to show how baseless the argument is that the vote is of no value.

Items of Interest

The new silver badge for war service, to be given to those who have been forced to retire owing to illness caused by war service, will be awarded also to nurses.

Durham University has set a fine example to those universities who will not even give a

degree to the women who earn them, by admitting a woman as Fellow, in the person of Miss Edith Killip, M.A.

Miss Lane-Clayton, M.D., D.Sc., has been appointed Dean to the Household and Social Science Department of King's College for Women (University of London).

Canon Houghton, in a recent speech at a garden party held under the auspices of the N.U.W.S.S., said the war had made him a late convert to the cause of Woman Suffrage, because, since women bore so large a share of the pain and work of the world, he could not see why they should not have a share in its government.

The Sultan of Egypt has offered to head with £500 the subscription list for an Egyptian memorial to Lord Kitchener, which he suggests shall take the form of a maternity hospital with a medical school for women.

An engineering factory, to continue after the war, will be opened shortly in Scotland; it will be worked as far as possible by women, and will be open to educated women between twenty and thirty-five, preferably widows and daughters of military and naval officers.

The chemical works at Disraeli Road, Willesden, claims to be the only factory of the kind run by women.

Bournemouth Town Council now employs women gardeners in the parks and pleasure gardens; and the L.C.C. has proposed the employment of women park keepers in London.

One hundred women have started work as dockers at Newport, Mon.

The first woman band sawyer has been introduced into the chair and furniture industry of Wycombe.

The Birmingham Hebrew Congregation has elected a woman as "marriage secretary." The *Jewish World* comments: "One of the things that have gone down in the general destruction has been the prejudice against woman's enfranchisement."

But, with all this advancement—a woman wearing a barrister's wig and gown was the other day refused admission to the Law Courts in the King's Bench Division!

SIR VICTOR HORSLEY, F.R.C.S., F.R.S.

The death in Mesopotamia from heat stroke of Sir Victor Horsley, the eminent surgeon, means a great loss to the Woman Suffrage movement. Besides being a firm believer in the equality of women with men, Sir Victor was one of the very few medical men who had the courage and the humanity to protest in public, both in print and on platforms, against the enormity of forcible feeding as practised on the militant suffragists in prison. Many of these women owed much to his skill, generously given, when they came out of prison after being subjected to this treatment; and suffragists will always owe him a debt of gratitude for the way he stood by them at the risk of his professional reputation, even though he did not always endorse their methods. A Liberal in deed as well as word, he was at one time prospective candidate for Market Harborough, when the two chief planks in his platform were woman suffrage and temperance, and once contested London University in the same interests. It was characteristic of his strong sense of social responsibility that he should have offered his services directly he heard of the breakdown of the medical service in Mesopotamia, where he unhappily met his death.

MR. LEONARD HALL

Mr. Leonard Hall, who died as the result of a motor omnibus accident in Birmingham, two or three weeks ago, was well-known among Suffragists for his sincere and staunch support of their cause. His wife and daughters were militant Suffragists, who went to prison more than once for the cause; and the present writer well remembers a conversation with him at a crowded public meeting, at a moment when he feared that his youngest daughter was being forcibly fed, an occasion on which he showed the fullest understanding of her course of action, as he always showed of all actions committed for conscience' sake. Our readers will join with us in sending a warm message of sympathy to Mr. Hall's family.

TO MOTHERS IN WAR TIME

By Laurence Housman

Now take up, so hard to hold,
Take, and turn this cup to gold!
Not with tears, but laughter, laughter,
Let it brim,
And following after
That young soul whose steady feet
Found one track to end retreat,
Bring again fresh life to him!—
Where, amid the shadowy throng,
He, new born from that sharp ending
Of a wrong beyond his mending,
Turns the ghost of his young sight
Backward for a trace of light
Whence he came. Where rays are few,
Let light fall on him from you!

You, his mother, by your pain,
Gave him life for this ill world:
Then 'twas he brought joy to you.
So, lest labour be in vain,
This now do!—
Give joy back to him anew;
And for faith his heart refit,
Where into gross darkness hurled,
Weighed by all the shame of it,
He and his young comrades sit
Spent and wasted,
Having tasted
Such brief sweets and so much bitter
At the banquet whence they hasted.

From the wild and wasting wrath
Of the wise,
And from the froth
Of careless fools, and from the eyes
Of blind prophets, whose blank stare
Led the world to its despair—
From the deaths of that dark wave
This young soul is yours to save!
Bear it back! Up from the tomb,
Bear it to the living womb
Whence it came! Again renew
This brave life which once was you;
Show the world—not face nor limb,
But the spiritual form of him,
Who was once thy babe to fashion,
Re-born from the mother's passion!
From the gulf which now stands gaping,
Whereunto the Nations run,
Monstrous, mouthing, devil-apeing,
Take this spirit for fresh shaping,
Woman, take, and save thy son!
Surely, some day, from this giving
Must come comfort for the living,
And the peaceful grave be blest;
When the world's joy following after
Clothes the ghostly lips with laughter,
And beneath kind roof and rafter
All dead lives return to rest
Each one on a mother's breast.

THE FRANCHISE SITUATION

Since our last issue appeared a debate (on July 19) has taken place in the House of Commons on the question of revising the Register. The occasion was the Government's motion for appointing a Select Committee of the House of Commons to find a way out of a difficulty that had so far baffled the Government, and we give our own views of the debate and the situation arising out of it on the next page.

Directly the Cabinet's proposal was made known by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons a letter was despatched to every member of the House of Commons by the executive of the United Suffragists, in which the following passages occur:—

We submit to you that this (i.e., the Government's) failure to provide a solution of the difficulty can be traced to two sources:—(1) The fact that a matter involving franchise issues has been approached from the limited standpoint of Registration only; and (2) That certain franchise anomalies, which existed before the War, have now, owing to war conditions, assumed acute proportions, which render their removal no longer merely desirable, but actually essential, before a General Election can be held in this country.

Every fair-minded man like yourself must feel it a meanness as well as an inconsistency to try to reform the Register in favour of men only, while women, who have been asking for citizenship for upwards of half a century, are pouring out their services at least as lavishly as men for the preservation of our country in her hour of need.

We would also point out to you that it will be impossible to secure votes to all those men who are serving the country either in the trenches, with the fleet, or in the workshops, without an abolition of the property qualification and a lowering of the time qualification.

We, therefore, on behalf of a Society of men and women who believe in the full representation of both sexes, call upon you to urge on Wednesday next the necessity for appointing a Select Committee, whose terms of reference shall not be limited to Registration reform (which will merely mean another postponement, not a settlement of the question), and whose personnel shall be a guarantee that this question will be approached in no niggardly fashion, but in a manner worthy of the Mother of Parliaments. In this way only will the pitfalls be avoided that have hindered the Cabinet in its attempts to frame a Bill, while our House of Commons will be at last brought into line with those other Parliaments of our Empire, in Australia, New Zealand, and three States of Canada, where neither sex nor property form a bar to representation.

ANSWERS FROM M.P.'s

From acknowledgments of this letter received by the United Suffragists' Executive from various Members we quote the following:—

Sir Joseph Walton: I shall certainly strongly support the enfranchisement of women at the first opportunity, either in connection with an alteration in the basis of the franchise or otherwise.

Sir William Byles: I have your letter, and quite agree.

Mr. Alfred W. Yeo: I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter re registration. The same is engaging my serious attention.

Mr. E. E. Prothero: I hope that if the Registration Committee is constituted it will either limit its reforms to a Registration Bill, or meet the whole question adequately by taking into consideration the extension of the franchise to women.

DEBATE IN THE HOUSE

The following allusions to Woman Suffrage during the debate on the proposed appointment of the Select Committee may be of interest:—

The Home Secretary (Mr. Herbert Samuel): But if you make special provision for the soldiers, the sailors, and the munition workers, the Committee will no doubt consider whether it is possible or desirable to avoid embarking Parliament on the great controversy of Woman Suffrage. There are, I know, some who lightly assume that some magic change has been worked by the war, and that a proposal which has hitherto evoked, not only enthusiastic support, but also resolute opposition, we can now expect will be agreed to almost with unanimity. If there are any who have such a thought I think the wish is father to that thought, and I have no doubt the Committee, when they come to investigate the matter, will find that if the registration or franchise proposals raise the question of Woman Suffrage, both Houses of Parliament will be involved in a very bitter political controversy at the present time.

Sir Edward Carson: There may be great difficulties about the question of enfranchisement. The right hon. gentleman, in a way certainly which I could not imitate, talked about raising the question of what is a munition worker, what is a woman, who is a woman, and should a woman have a vote, and all the rest of it. Let us leave all these terrible questions for the moment out of consideration. Let us not be frightened about them.

Mr. Wardle: For my part, I do not agree that

the question of enfranchisement should not now be considered either by this Committee or by the House. I do not see how it is possible to avoid consideration of that question. If you are going to have a register, the question of who are to appear on that register is a question of enfranchisement; otherwise, if you put soldiers and sailors on the register, then you enfranchise them; and, therefore, the whole question of enfranchisement comes under the purview of the Committee, or ought to do so, and under the purview of the House. I want to make an appeal to the Government to take a definite line, and I want to make an appeal to the House, on this occasion, that we should try and settle at this time many of these outstanding problems with regard to the franchise while there is a Coalition Government in power; while there is a so-called political truce. . . . I am for the full programme of registration, enfranchisement, and redistribution while there is a Coalition Government, and that an agreement be reached, so that we may have one of the matters of political controversy cleared out of the way.

THE PRIME MINISTER: If the House desires to throw the whole responsibility upon the Government to make propositions, we will accept their judgment; we will consider the question, and if we are able to do so, as I hope we shall be, we shall make proposals of our own.

DEPUTATION TO MR. ASQUITH

Our readers will remember that the important Suffrage deputation of men and women, representative of the Suffrage and Labour movements, was asked to communicate further with the Prime Minister, if necessary, after his forthcoming statement in the House. Accordingly, as soon as the announcement was made of the proposal to set up a Select Committee, Mrs. Ayrton Gould (hon. secretary of the Deputation Committee) wrote to Mr. Asquith on behalf of the Deputation, urging him to ensure that the terms of reference of the proposed Select Committee should not be limited to Registration, but should admit of the discussion of Woman Suffrage also, and asking him to arrange for the Deputation to be received by the Committee when appointed. The letter went on to say:—

We submit that the admitted failure of the Government to arrive at a solution of the present electoral problem arises from the fact that it has been approached merely as a Registration question; and we are convinced that any attempt to solve it that does not start with a frank and courageous recognition of the claims of women, at a moment when our very national existence depends at least as much upon our women as our men, will assuredly fail of success at the outset.

WHAT THE COUNTRY THINKS

Well-known Authors Urge Woman Suffrage

Mr. H. W. Massingham addressed a powerful letter to the *Times* of July 18, in the course of which he says—

If the Committee on Registration is appointed, and finds, as it is bound to find, that its real subject-matter is the franchise, the country will, I think, be fully prepared to include in it the woman's vote. There is no antagonism between the women's case and that of the soldiers who have lost qualification. A new Register would be a mockery if it left out the armies; it would be equally unreal if, in view of all that has happened since the war broke in on the nation, it omitted half the community. . . . If indeed it be true that the people have been one, it is because the genius of women has been lavishly applied to the task of reinforcing and complementing the genius of men. . . . This was not surprising to those who knew the long travail of their apprenticeship to public life; their work in education and local government; their skill in the professions open to them; the unselfishness of their choice of hard and uninteresting detail; the freshness and conscientiousness with which they joined themselves to the work of directing or being directed. The excellence of this self-training appeared in August, 1914, and the country now knows that it has at its disposal not an emergency service, but a permanent and varied enrichment of its energies, when they are again restored to the normal uses of civilised being.

There has, I am sure, been a real process of conversion in regard to woman franchise. The Government and the House of Commons have only to reflect this change of opinion and temper.

Mr. John Galsworthy

In the *Observer* a forceful demand for the enfranchisement of women appeared over the signature of Mr. John Galsworthy on July 2. If we do not accept his suggestion of equalising the numbers of men and women by fixing the voting age of the latter higher than that of the former, we are none the less appreciative of his vigorous plea for the citizenship of women, and we welcome his advocacy of the abolition of the pro-

perty qualification. In the course of his letter he says:—

To continue after this war to debar from being citizens, if they so wish, the hundreds of thousands of women who have served as loyally as men, and suffered more; to hang up again in hopeless chancery a measure of common justice that has long commended itself to nearly all the best minds in the country; a measure that, but for political accidents, would have already been granted, would be an unspeakable piece of national folly and ingratitude. We are not so foolish and ungrateful as all that; there is surely now a general will to give the vote. What our minds must be turned to is the need, at the conclusion of the war, or even before, to have ready some means by which that general desire may be carried into effect, and women welcomed into the body politic, before the old deadlock difficulties and heart-burnings can begin again.

There is so much work to be done, so great a fight for the nation's health, ahead. It is time the decks were cleared of lumber!

[For important Press Comments see page 191.]

THE SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES

Other Suffrage Societies, like the United Suffragists, were active in their efforts to secure the inclusion of our question among those to be considered by the suggested Select Committee. Members of Parliament were circulated also by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and a strong letter, signed by the Executive, appeared in the Press and contained a striking allusion to a speech of Lord Derby's in which he said—"Women are now part and parcel of the Army."

The Women's Freedom League, Workers' Suffrage Federation, Free Church League, New Constitutional Society, and others, were also active, circulating M.P.s who had voted for former Suffrage Bills, writing to members of the Cabinet, lobbying, and reminding Parliament generally that the women could not be left out if franchise questions were under consideration. The Irishwomen's Suffrage Federation sent a strong letter to all the Irish M.P.s claiming that the proposed Registration Bill should be a Franchise Bill and include women.

Among others, the Executive of the Manchester Men's League passed a resolution on the subject, which was sent to the Cabinet; and the Northern Men's Federation, in another, called upon the Government "to incorporate women on equal terms with men in the Parliamentary Register," and announced their intention "to oppose by every means in their power any alteration of the franchise which does not so include women." The Berwick-on-Tweed, Glasgow, and Manchester and East Lancs. Branches of the N.M.F. also sent strong letters (which we regret we have not space to reprint) to the same effect, to every Member of the Cabinet.

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Owing to the change from a weekly to a monthly issue of VOTES FOR WOMEN, two large airy rooms are now vacant at 27, Chancery Lane, and can be let temporarily or permanently, furnished or unfurnished (electric light ready for use), on application to the Hon. Financial Treasurer (Mrs. Ayrton Gould, United Suffragists, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.).

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The terms are (while a monthly issue), post free, 2s annual subscription, 1s. for six months, inside the United Kingdom; 2s. (3dol.) and 1s. (25 cents) abroad, payable in advance.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

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AUGUST, 1916.

OUR SOLUTION OF THE REGISTRATION MUDDLE

But if you make special provision for the soldiers, the sailors, and the munition workers, the Committee will no doubt consider whether it is possible or desirable to avoid embarking Parliament on the great controversy of Women Suffrage. (*The Right Honble. Herbert Samuel introducing the Government motion for the appointment of a Select Committee on Registration and the Franchise, in the House of Commons, July 19, 1916.*)

I am for the full programme of registration, enfranchisement, and re-distribution while there is a Coalition Government, so that we may have one of the matters of political controversy cleared out of the way. (*Mr. Wardle, M.P., on the same occasion.*)

If Suffragists cared only for the logic of their cause the breakdown of the Government's proposal to submit the question of Registration and Franchise to a Select Committee of the House of Commons would seem to them merely a vindication of what they have been saying for many months—that it is impossible to revise the Register without bringing in a Franchise Bill, and impossible to bring in a Franchise Bill without including women in it. But progressive Suffragists take a bigger view of the matter than would be expressed in this cheap verbal triumph. They are Suffragists because they believe in the government of the people by the people for the people, and it is intolerable to them that a Register which is utterly unrepresentative—even of the men of the country—should continue in this condition simply because our rulers hesitate to grapple with the position courageously and on broad lines.

The Position Outlined

What is the position? Twice since the outbreak of war the annual revision of the voters' lists has been postponed, until, as the Prime Minister stated in the House on July 19, the Register has been depleted by 50 per cent. of its normal strength. In anticipation of this the Government undertook last autumn to set up "special registers" instead, but the difficulty of preparing these special lists (the object of which was to ensure that no man on active service should lose his vote) was found to be so great that a simple Bill, prolonging the life of Parliament for nine months beyond its statutory termination last January, was substituted for the foreshadowed Registration measure. Difficulties, however, do not diminish with postpone-

ment, and the moment is approaching when, in September, the Government will be faced with the same two alternatives as before—a General Election or a prolongation of Parliament. In the nine months that have nearly elapsed since the last prolongation the Cabinet has admittedly failed to frame a scheme that shall secure the votes of men engaged in war or on war work, and the device of shifting the solution of the problem on to the shoulders of the House of Commons has failed because the Cabinet's mouthpiece, Mr. Herbert Samuel, did not attempt to conceal that it was only a device. So we are back again where we were last Christmas. There must not be a General Election because there is no Register. There is no Register because the Government finds it impossible to prepare one.

Government's Past Sins Block the Way

It is hard to believe that a situation so unworthy of the traditions of British statesmanship should have arisen; it is incredible that it should be allowed to continue. Every Suffragist knows what it is that stands in the way of an easy solution of the difficulty. The Cabinet knows equally what it is, and the House of Commons knows that the Cabinet knows, and they both know that we know that they know. Apart from the women's claims, do men care so little for their votes that they are content to allow the Mother of Parliaments to play this childish game of hide-and-seek with democracy? For that is what it amounts to when politicians, for fear of a little controversy over the votes of women, do not scruple to withhold the votes of men, running the risk of a General Election (which the House of Lords may well force upon them in the autumn) on a Register that is representative of no section in the community except, perhaps, the great land and property owners, whom the war has not forced to change their place of abode.

A Possible Danger.

It is, perhaps, something gained that Mr. Herbert Samuel, in the passage from his speech that stands at the head of this article, referred even indirectly to the real cause of the Registration deadlock; something, too, that the *Times*, in its leading article on the following day, mentioned "the perennial problem of woman suffrage" as one of the difficulties the Government had to face in framing a new Register. But, adds the *Times* with reference to these difficulties, "we agree with what was clearly the opinion of the House, that they ought to be faced, and that it is the business of the Government to face them." Exactly so. It has been made clear, both by the Government's failure and by members' speeches during the debate on July 19, that the only way to ensure votes to men who have made sacrifices for their country during the war is to lower the time qualification. But unless this can be done outside a Franchise Bill it immediately raises the question of woman suffrage (which can never again be excluded from a Franchise Bill), even if this were not raised already by the recognition of war work as a voting qualification for men. But here it will be wise, perhaps, to mention a possible danger. The Home Secretary, it is true, assumed in his speech that only a Franchise Bill would be able to effect this class of alteration in the electoral law. But both Sir Edward Carson and Sir Courtenay Warner in the same debate spoke as if such a change might be made through revision of the Register, and Mr.

Asquith did not wholly disagree when he said with characteristic legal caution:—

It is almost impossible—I will not say it is quite impossible—but at any rate it is very difficult to create a new Register under conditions such as those in which we are now living, without raising the question of the franchise.

Too Late to Quibble

It is scarcely conceivable that the Speaker, who was so circumspect as to rule out of order the woman suffrage amendment to the Reform Bill of 1913, should allow a statutory change like the lowering of the time qualification to be effected in a Bill dealing with Registration only, but the point need not be laboured here. The whole question has reached a level that should place it above such quibbles as points of order. There is only one way out of the Registration muddle, and that is to introduce into the House of Commons a Government Franchise Bill to sweep away the existing anomalies, which make the annual revision of the Register such a costly and complicated business as to cause expense and shortage of labour to be alleged as two reasons for allowing the revision to lapse. United Suffragists and other organizations, who have recently widened their suffrage demand, find an extra justification for so doing, if such were needed, in the present Registration muddle, for it enables them to show the Government the only solution of that muddle—a simple measure to enfranchise men and women on the basis of their humanity.

Who is afraid of Controversy?

There is something a little pathetic in the politician's fear of controversy. That they—who live in a perpetual atmosphere of disputation, who have not been deterred by "conditions such as those in which we are now living" from provoking storms of controversy over the introduction of conscription, the suspension of the right of Habeas Corpus, and the limitation of freedom of speech and of the Press—should hesitate to put an end to what is admittedly becoming a public scandal, lest, in the Prime Minister's words, "you let in a number of other questions of a highly controversial character," is hardly to be taken seriously! Where are all the people who would rush into controversy if the Government were to announce that it intended to take the advice of Mr. Wardle, M.P.—a statesman among politicians!—whose words also stand at the head of this article? And would anybody listen if they did? Even the minister who once hurled the epithet "Bipeds!" at women who asked for a vote would have to be silent now in the face of the thousands of charming-looking and competent bipeds who conduct and drive our trams, work our machinery, and accomplish other feats that used to be done only by those who never had to pretend that they were legless. Anti-suffrage is out of date—pre-war, in fact. "The Government and the House of Commons have only to reflect this change of opinion and temper," wrote Mr. H. W. Massingham recently in a fine letter to the *Times*.

The Real Cost of War.

Controversy? How this dwindles into unimportance beside the stupendous cost of war! I do not mean Mr. McKenna's £6,000,000 a day, but a cost that only women can estimate to the last precious atom of flesh and blood. An argument used in the debate on July 19 by Sir Edward Carson, Major Astor, and others, pointed to the urgent need for a new Register on which a Parliament could be elected to deal with terms of peace. No one reading the daily casualty lists of the past month can overlook the significance to women, as well as to men, of that future Parliament, nor the meaning of women's passionate desire to share in its election.

Evelyn Sharp.

THE WAR—AND AFTER

By Councillor Margaret Ashton

(Passages from a Speech made at the British Dominions Woman Suffrage Conference in London, on July 7, 1916.)

The War has made us recognise more than ever before the importance of paying women an adequate wage. We hear a good deal of the tremendous wages of munition workers, but it is only a minority of the women who are earning a large wage; the great mass of them are not getting the 20s. minimum promised by the Government, even in Government works. The Government to-day, as always, is the chief employer of labour, and when the chief employer of labour does not come up to his own standard you cannot expect the ordinary employer to be any better. There are a great many who employ women to-day (with the cost of living as it is!) at thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen shillings a week. This is going on all over the country, and also in many of the trades that are not directly or intimately connected with the war, but still are classed under the Munitions Act, such as the clothing, leather and similar trades, and various smaller industries. And when we find Government by its Wages Boards settling wages, as it did just a year before the war in the clothing trade, at the rate of 6d. an hour for men and 3d. an hour for women, we must recognise that women have yet a long fight before them in order to secure decent wages in any of the trades over which the Government has any supervision.

Equal Pay for Men and Women

We have, then, both now and after the war, to make a strenuous fight to get equal pay for equal work. All through the war they have been re-arranging the work in munition factories, putting in machinery that has done away with heavy labour, putting women on light machines that were never run by men before, and thus making it possible to establish a new and low rate for the work done on these machines. We have also the question of juvenile labour, which is one intimately connected with women. A boy of fourteen is considered the equivalent, as far as wages go, of a woman of eighteen. We all know that a woman of eighteen can do more work in the time, and much better work, than a little boy of fourteen; this basis is, therefore, quite wrong.

We are constantly told that you cannot pay a woman as much as a man because she is not so permanent in her employment. But I think we overdo the idea of permanence in employment. We see men leaving their employment quite habitually to better themselves; they change about a good deal from one employer to another. Why, if marriage is a way to better yourself, should it not be considered an equally reasonable thing for a woman to leave her employer for that purpose? I do not think it is worse for an employer that a woman should leave to get married than that a man should leave to better himself.

A "Patriotic" Employer

It is true that in some industries women are not quite so good all-round as men. The work has to be specialised for women; but, again, it is equally true that women do certain work a great deal better than men. We have only to take the instance of the Post Office and Bank of England, where women can trace forged notes much better than men because of the finer sensitiveness of their fingers; but the women are paid less because they are women. I know

an individual case where an employer found that certain women in engineering were making over £5 a week, more than the men were able to make off the same machines, because the women's output was greater. The employer said it was impossible to go on paying women such wages. It was not that he was losing; he was profiting by their work; but he thought it wrong for women to make such good money, so he altered the machines—a nut here and a bolt there—thus preventing the women from turning out as much work, although it was needed by the Government. That is an attitude of mind that prevails against women in industry.

Equal Opportunities, Too!

We want to ensure after the war that there shall be equal opportunities for women. I lay even more stress on the equal opportunities than on the equal wage. Take, for example, even the freest of our professions, that of medicine. Our women doctors do not get the same opportunity as the men; they are never, or very rarely, appointed on the staff of general hospitals; they do not get the experience of men doctors before they enter into practice on their own account. They are denied the opportunity of becoming experts in the same way as men. The law, as far as women are concerned, is a closed corporation. We shall have to make a very strenuous effort to open all the professions to women, as well as the industries, when the war is over.

One of the things we shall have to face after this war is that there will be an infinitely larger number of women with no sons left to support them, who have never been able, owing to low wages, to put by for their old age. There will be fewer men to marry the women, who will therefore have to face their future alone. Now, it is recognised that working women age earlier than men; and one of the grave difficulties we have been faced with in dealing with war conditions is that the underfed woman aged from forty-five to sixty is unemployable, because she has been worn out from her youth. (It is noticeable that where women are getting good pay and being adequately fed and cared for they do not break down in health.) Now, numbers of such women have been called by the Government out of their homes, and in many cases out of their own little underpaid trades, many of which, being luxury trades, will not be revived again, to do war work. The State by its action has abolished the old idea of woman's status, which was based on the idea that marriage was her ultimate end; the State must, therefore, after the war, put her on a self-supporting basis. The State, during the war, has for the first time recognised the entity of wives through the separation allowance. That is a great step forward, of which we have scarcely yet realised the full significance.

Difference Between Men and Women

There is another point in the regulation of industry after the war. Over and over again those of us who have been watching women's work have recognised that women work quite differently from men. They can work with tremendous speed, but for shorter hours than men. Men can go slogging on for twelve hours a day for six days a week. Women cannot do that and turn out good work and continue in health. They work with more concentration

and rapidity, and are more conscientious than men. Though this is not yet recognised as it should be—they also get expert quicker than men. All labour legislation has hitherto been made to suit the male worker; after the war, with the enormous influx of women into the industries, we shall have to see that the particular way in which women work is considered. I am of opinion that half-time work for women may be a good solution. I am not fond of half-time, because I come from Lancashire, and have seen a good deal of half-time among children. It is absolutely disastrous in every way for children; but for adult women, working at the speed at which women appear habitually to work, it may be a good thing.

Why the Vote Becomes Essential

It will be difficult to make these different arrangements for men and women, but it should not be impossible. I will tell you what does make it impossible—the fact that women are still unrepresented. This is where the help of the community will be needed more than ever before. We have only to look back to the condition of the voteless workers after the Napoleonic wars. It is a comparison which is very useful. When the men came back, just as our men will come back, there was the same disorganisation of industry, the same overwhelming difficulty in adjusting hours and wages; the whole of industry was shaken to its root. In those days all the employed were unrepresented, and there came long years of unrest, ending up with famine, and it was only when the famine became too acute that it was recognised that you must take the condition of the workers into consideration. There will be the same thing after this war. A huge mass of women workers will be unrepresented; there will be nobody to put their case in Parliament. It is easier for women to be heard than it was ten or fifteen years ago, but we still have no power in our hands to enforce our will on Parliament. The whole of the industry of the country will be at stake after the war: it will depend very largely on the conditions that prevail for women after the war how soon we shall recover from the war.

The Only Way

We want the vote at once, and the Overseas women in London, who are free, ought to do everything in their power to make members of Parliament understand what it is that English women need; how vital it is for the nation that we should take our share in the reconstruction after the war. The vote for all men and women—real, true, adult, democratic suffrage—that is the only way to help us through the phenomenal difficulties that we see ahead of us in the years to come.

STAFF HOLIDAY

Owing to the depletion of the staff of the United Suffragists, under war conditions, it is necessary to close the offices at 27, Chancery Lane, for the first half of August in order that the staff may have a well-earned holiday. The offices will therefore close on Saturday, July 29, at 1 p.m., and will re-open on Monday morning, August 14, at 10 a.m.

All correspondence will be dealt with promptly during that time, though U.S. members are asked to make it as light as possible.

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

27, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. Telephone, Holborn 5880

"VOTES FOR WOMEN"

Many new subscribers to VOTES FOR WOMEN have been obtained during the past month. But we want more! A vast amount of work and self-sacrifice goes towards the production of our paper month by month. The depletion of the editorial staff, owing to war conditions, throws the whole work of writing and editing the paper upon so few people that these are greatly overworked. In addition, there is the self-sacrifice of all those who, war or no war, continue to deny themselves in various ways in order to send regular donations towards the cost of production. Without all this effort, which is given with the utmost willingness, the paper could not continue to appear. The only thing we ask our readers to do, in order to show that they think the effort worth while (as we know they do), is to extend the sale of the paper as much as possible.

HOW TO ORDER THE PAPER

To ensure receiving the paper regularly (it appears on the last Thursday in every month), fill in and cut out the order form on the back page of this issue, and send it, with 2s., to the Publisher, VOTES FOR WOMEN, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.

If you already take the paper regularly, take another copy for a friend; or for the nearest Public Library, reading-room, or similar institution; or for your doctor's or dentist's consulting-room.

The Editor.

INDOOR CAMPAIGN

We much regret that lack of space forbids our giving an account of the Joint Suffrage Meeting, held in connection with the British Dominions Woman Suffrage Union Conference on July 7, or of the U.S. London Members' meeting held at the end of July, at which it was resolved to hold an autumn series of fortnightly At Homes, beginning in October. Good accounts of the B.D.W.S.U. Conference (July 5-7) appeared in the *Christian Commonwealth* of July 12, and in the *Herald* of July 15.

OUTDOOR CAMPAIGN

In spite of adverse weather, we have been able to hold several well-attended meetings in Hyde Park during the past month, which have aroused keen interest and enthusiasm, and practically no opposition. Occasionally some of the stock arguments of the anti-suffragist are brought forth, but they fall strangely flat under war-time conditions; and not even a self-styled supporter of our cause, who has, however, on at least two occasions asked us to pledge ourselves to the everlasting abstention of women from Cabinet rank, has succeeded in persuading our audience of the danger to the State of a woman Premier. Our thanks are due to the little band of U.S. members who have helped us by their presence at both the Sunday and the Thursday meetings. Our activities must be in abeyance this month, but we trust to begin the autumn campaign in September.

A. S.

U.S. WOMEN'S CLUB

92, Borough Road, S.E.

Secretary, Miss M. E. Cochrane. Tel.: Hop 4172
August Recess.—The Club will close on Friday evening, July 28, and will reopen on the first Monday in September.

Members' Holidays.—The Outing took place on July 15. (See below.) We are most grateful for the generous help given by our friends, both for the outing and for the Girls' Holiday Fund. (See on this page.) Ten of our girls and one of our women have already been away to Leigh-on-Sea, and some more are going in August, some to Leigh and some to the country.

Club Affiliation.—Since our last issue the Club has been affiliated to the Women's United Service League (Presidents, Lady Jellicoe and Lady French). This puts us in touch with the other clubs, of which there are over 100, belonging to the League, and will give us opportunities of meeting members of these clubs.

Thanks.—Mrs. Vesel, Miss L. Fox, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Blew, Mrs. White, for flowers; Mrs. White for clothes; Miss Page, 2s. 6d.

CLUB OUTING

Eleven helpers and forty-one Club members went in motor omnibuses to Epping Forest, on Saturday, July 15. Leaving the Club at half-past one, they arrived at Theydon Bois at three, where they found a substantial tea spread for them in a pretty room in the Retreat. This was heartily appreciated (the flowers on the tables coming in for a large share of praise) by everybody; and after tea the party scattered in various directions, some going for a stroll in the forest, but by far the greater number distributing themselves about the various side-shows and other amusements. Roundabouts, coconut shies, donkey rides, joy-wheels, were all equally popular; and no one present will readily forget seeing the youngest old lady of the party (who will never, never see 75 again) flying through the air on the aerial wire, or goading her sedate donkey into a semblance of a trot. But all, old and young, had a splendid time; and the Club was not reached again until after ten o'clock in the evening.

BIRMINGHAM U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Miss Julia Green, 13, Suffolk Street

A meeting of members was called on July 14 to consider (a) the threatened political situation in regard to electoral changes; (b) the affairs of the office. From the first it was obvious that the spirit of the meeting was enthusiastic and resolute. The proposed extension of the franchise to men only had roused the old fighting spirit to an exhilarating degree. One member promptly guaranteed £5 and another 10s. for the support of a scheme of active propaganda, which has been laid before the U.S. headquarters in London. A resolution urging the Government to include women in any electoral change was unanimously passed. The discussion of the affairs of the office led to a warmly expressed vote of thanks to Miss Julia Green, whose devoted and capable work has enabled us to keep it open. Mrs. and Miss Gristwood are very kindly arranging a "Social" for October. Will all members and friends look out for the date in the next number of VOTES FOR WOMEN and keep it free?

GLASGOW U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Miss Thomson, 55, Bath Street, Glasgow

At our last Members' Meeting, held on July 12 at 55, Bath Street, the following resolution was unanimously passed, and copies of it were sent by the Secretary to the Prime Minister and to all the Scottish members: "This meeting repudiates the principle adopted by the Liberal and Unionist War Committees, which bases the right to the franchise on military service, and affirms its belief in the democratic principle that the right to vote should be based neither on sex, property, nor any one service, but on the common humanity of men and women." The Secretary also read over the letters containing the resolution of the United Suffragists to alter their demand for the franchise so as to include all women as well as all men, and the Glasgow U.S. voted unanimously for the resolution after some discussion, during which various members spoke, both for and against it. It was decided to hold open-air meetings during the next two months, the first to be held at the corner of Peel Street, Partick, on July 20. Mrs. Dollan and Miss Thomson will be the speakers. The next will be held on July 27, at the corner of Whitesall Street, Dennistoun.

Members are asked to rally round at this important time, and to do all in their power to make these and the other meetings a great success.

HAMPSTEAD AND COLDER'S GREEN U.S.

Hon. Secretaries: Miss Daisy Solomon, 64, Pattison Road, N.W.; Miss Dorothy Pethick, 39, Meadway Court, Colder's Green, N.W.

A successful and well-attended drawing-room meeting was held, by kind invitation of the Misses Thompson, on Saturday, July 1. Dr. Helen Hanson and Mr. Laurence Housman were the speakers, and had an appreciative audience. A lively discussion followed. The collection amounted to £1 1s., and one order for VOTES FOR WOMEN was secured. We hope to resume these meetings in the early autumn. Offers of drawing-rooms for meetings are urgently required, also subscriptions to Poster Fund.

KENSINGTON U.S.

Hon. Sec., Miss Postlethwaite, 47a, Earl's Court Road, W. Telephone: 926 Western

Proceeds from the Jumble Sale amounted to over £14, with more to follow when the sale is completed. This satisfactory result is partly due to the contribution of art remnants kindly sent by Miss Thornbury. Thanks are due to all who helped with the sale, Mrs. Anderson, Miss Barclay, Miss Chamberlain, Miss Ferguson, Miss Martin, Miss Morgan, Mrs. Morrison, and Mrs. Jones, and especially to Mrs. and Miss B. Ward, who undertook to price the goods. The Garden Party, held at the Red House (by kind permission of Mrs.

Hoover), was in every way a great success. Miss Ada Moore spoke in an interesting way of the Women's Club at Southwark, to which the proceeds of the party were devoted, the sum raised amounting to £5. Thanks are due to those who came to entertain, Miss Ada Moore, Miss Ada Stuart's orchestra, Miss Comper and the Merry Maids, also to the helpers who contributed so much to the success of the afternoon. Gratefully acknowledged from Mrs. Hartley Withers £1 1s., and from Mrs. Mayatt 1s. for general expenses.

MANCHESTER U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Miss Hope Hampson Trevena, Bowdon

The Manchester City Council refused the use of Platt Fields for the Suffrage meeting on July 22. No reason was given for the refusal. A strong protest has been sent by the Joint Committee of Women's Suffrage Societies in Manchester to the Lord Mayor and all members of the Town Council. Dr. Helena Jones gave a very interesting account of her experiences with the Serbian Hospital unit in Corsica on July 14. A fairly good audience assembled, and the collection was the largest yet secured at these meetings. Dr. Herbert has promised to give a series of three lectures at the end of September on "Pre-Marital Relationships," "Marital Relationships," and "Venereal Disease." The lectures will be given fortnightly, on Friday evenings.

NEW U.S. BRANCH

A new branch of the United Suffragists is being formed at Ashford (Kent), where the railway works of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway are situated. Our readers will remember that a first-rate deputation from the railwaymen at Ashford came up to London in July, 1914, to interview the Prime Minister and demand the enfranchisement of women. They saw the Prime Minister's Secretary, and left behind them a strongly-worded message which was afterwards circulated in the streets.

Mr. John Marsh (45, Roys Road, Willsborough, Kent) has kindly consented to act as Hon. Secretary of the new Branch; and the United Suffragists have been fortunate enough to secure, through Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck, the services of Miss Maude White (Magazine House, Winchelsea, Sussex) as Organizer. Great things are hoped for as a result of this combination of services, and a big public meeting will be held in Ashford, under the auspices of the Ashford U.S., in October.

U.S. FUND

Subscriptions Received June 16—July 15, 1916

	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Mrs. Andrews ...	0 10 6	Leeds U.S.	5 0 0
Mrs. Baillie-Weaver	2 0 0	Mrs. McEvoy ...	0 5 0
Miss M. and J. Barrowman	0 5 0	Miss A.L. McNeill	6 1 0
Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck	1 0 0	Miss M. Mears ...	0 13 0
Miss Berwick ...	1 1 0	David Perry, Esq.	5 0 0
Miss M. Brady ...	0 5 0	Miss	
Mrs. Brewster ...	3 0 0	Postlethwaite	1 1 0
Miss S. C. Brown	2 0 0	Mrs. Richardson	0 3 6
Miss M. Chadwick	1 1 0	Miss M. Senneft	0 10 0
Chorley Wood		Miss E. Sharp ...	1 1 0
U.S.	1 5 0	Miss H. E. Sheppard	1 1 0
Miss Coster ...	0 10 0	Miss Somers ...	0 13 0
Laurence Housman, Esq.	2 0 0	Miss K. J. P. Walford	0 10 0
Mrs. Hyde ...	0 5 0	4 Half-Crown	
In Memoriam, J. A. S.	3 3 0	Subscriptions	0 10 0
J. W. Jendwine, Esq.	0 5 0	6 Two-Shilling	
Miss M. C. Kirkwood	0 3 0	Subscriptions	0 12 0
		9 Shilling	
		Subscriptions	0 9 0
			£42 3 0

CLUB OUTING AND HOLIDAY FUND

	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Already acknow-		Miss Coster ...	0 10 0
ledged ...	9 2 6	Staff of County	
Anonymous ...	3 0 0	Secondary	
Mrs. Harben ...	3 3 0	School, Kentish	
Miss Haag ...	0 2 6	Town, per Miss	
Mrs. Hardcastle ...	0 2 6	Somers ...	0 15 0
Miss A. Hicks ...	0 10 0	Miss Halket ...	0 5 0
Mrs. McCall ...	0 10 0	Miss Lillian Dawson (Oxford)	0 10 0
Mrs. Fox		Mrs. Hancock ...	0 3 0
Strangways	0 2 0	Mrs. Ayrton Gould	0 5 0
Miss Burke ...	0 5 0	Miss Horton ...	0 3 6
Miss Louis ...	0 2 6	Miss R. Collins ...	0 2 6
Miss Wilmot ...	0 2 0	Miss Dalgliesh ...	0 1 0
Mrs. Potbury ...	0 4 6	Miss Nicholls ...	0 2 6
Mrs. Allen ...	0 5 0	Miss Wilkinson ...	0 5 0
Miss Allen ...	0 2 6	Miss Wilson ...	0 15 0
Miss Chalmers			
(per)	0 5 0		
Mrs. Ratcliffe ...	0 5 0	Total	22 7 0
Mrs. Richmond ...	0 5 0		

COMPARISON OF PUNISHMENTS

LIGHT SENTENCES

Assault on Two Girls

The *Morning Advertiser* (June 23) reports case of a butcher's salesman and special constable indicted at the London Sessions before Mr. Allan James Lawrie, K.C., for having improperly assaulted two schoolgirls, both aged eleven. The Judge considered the offences were "very serious," and described the sentence as "the smallest he could pass on the prisoner, in spite of his good character hitherto."

Sentence: Twelve months' imprisonment.

Injuring a Woman

The *Morning Advertiser* (July 17) reports case of a clerk charged before Mr. Hedderwick at North London Police Court with occasioning grievous bodily harm to a young woman, whom he attacked and struck so violently that she jumped out of the window to escape him. The magistrate called it "half-murdering the woman," and said he would treat it as a case of "aggravated assault."

Sentence: Three months' hard labour.

Summarily Dealt With

The *Morning Advertiser* (July 18) reports case of a skin dresser, charged at Stratford with assaulting an invalid ex-soldier, without any provocation, in such a violent way as to cause him to faint.

Sentence: One month's hard labour.

HEAVY SENTENCES

Theft of Jewellery

The *Morning Advertiser* (July 19) reports case of an engineer, charged at the London Sessions before Mr. Robert Wallace, K.C., with stealing £1,000 worth of jewellery from a house in which he had obtained a situation by a false reference. He had a bad record, and there were other charges of fraud against him.

Sentence: Three years' penal servitude.

Stealing A Bottle of Scent

The *Morning Advertiser* (June 29) reports case of a temporary postman, charged before Mr. Francis at Westminster Police Court with stealing a postal packet containing a sample bottle of scent. Other missing articles were mentioned, but he was dealt with only with respect to the bottle of scent.

Sentence: Three months' hard labour.

Committed for Trial

The *Morning Advertiser* (June 23) reports case of a sergeant-major, charged at Brentford Police Court with stealing a bicycle, and also with attempting to commit suicide in the cells.

Committed for trial.

Our comparisons in the above table of punishments offer fresh examples of the greater seriousness with which offences against property are regarded in our Courts as compared with those committed against the person. Jewellery is considered three times as important as the persons and morals of two little girls of 11; a bottle of scent is appraised as equal to the person of a young woman; a bicycle is regarded as far more valuable than the person of an invalid ex-soldier, so that the robber of the one is committed for trial, while the assailant of the other gets off with a summary sentence of one month's hard labour.

"Good Character"

Our first comparison illustrates a common state of affairs—the plea of a "good character" being allowed in the case of the man charged with one of the worst of crimes, while a bad character is taken into account where theft is concerned. So often have we had occasion to criticise judges for their readiness to accept the excuse of good character only in the one class of crime, and of bad character only in the other and (in our view) less heinous form of crime, that it is only just to record the recent case of the magistrate at West London Police Court who, in humanely discharging a man who pleaded poverty and misfortune as his excuse for stealing £40 worth of goods, said to him: "You are more to be pitied than blamed." We should welcome more instances of this wise leniency in cases of theft. Too often it is reserved for those instances of criminal and improper assault upon children, of common assault upon both men and women.

A LIFE SENTENCE

We, who do not advocate long sentences of imprisonment for any class of crime, have always maintained that some other means should be found of protecting the community from incorrigible criminals, above all in the case of men who prey upon little children and are not, in our opinion, to be regarded as sane. At the Surrey Assizes, on June 28, Mr. Justice Darling sentenced a man cook, aged 40, to penal servitude for life for a criminal assault on four young boys (there were previous convictions), and in passing sentence referred to the prisoner's "criminal mania," and said, according to the *Times* (June 29) report, that "he felt it his duty to preserve society from such acts."

"When," concludes the report of his remarks, "the prison doctor was satisfied that the prisoner could be

safely released, steps could be taken to that end."

A Remarkable Judgment

This judgment of Judge Darling's (if correctly reported) is remarkable for several reasons. Penal servitude for life is also the maximum sentence for criminal assault upon little girls under thirteen, but we do not remember ever having seen it passed of recent years upon anyone convicted of this crime against girls in our own country. (In Australia, where capital punishment is the maximum sentence for criminal assault, this is still passed on occasion, though it is always, we believe, commuted to penal servitude afterwards.)

In addition to the remarkable fact of the maximum sentence having been given at the Surrey Assizes, we have the Judge's recognition (1) of the abnormality of the crime, and (2) of his duty to preserve society from its repetition. And, finally, we have the decision as to the man's fitness for release left in the hands of the prison doctor—a recognition of the medical as well as the criminal nature of the man's "mania."

Our Comments

There is much that is to the good in Mr. Justice Darling's view of this case. Cases of criminal assault upon children should, we consider, be approached from the medical and physiological standpoint, as well as the merely penal one. They should be punished, if punishment is an indication of their seriousness, with the maximum sentence. The commutation of the sentence should depend upon the man's fitness to mix again with his fellows without danger to society. All this is to the good.

But there are one or two questions we should like to ask. Is the prison doctor, or any official in whose power the prisoner is, the right person to say when the man should be released? We emphatically think not, and this without making any reflection on prison officials as such. We think the power to decide such a difficult question, depending upon moral and psychological considerations, as well as medical and punitive considerations, ought not to be in the hands of any one person, least of all when that one person is a prison official, against whom no valid evidence in the prisoner's favour can ever be taken, and so long as prison medical officers are all men.

We should also like to ask why it is that the enlightened attitude shown by Judge Darling with regard to the true nature of this horrible crime has not, so far as we know, been hitherto shown in the Courts when the little victims of criminal mania are girls and not boys? The argument that the one

is natural and the other unnatural crime cannot be held seriously for a moment, when we are dealing, as we continually are, with assaults on baby girls by grown and sometimes middle-aged men. If there is any comparison to be made between the two instances of the same crime it would seem to point to the greater seriousness of it when committed against little girls on account of the greater physical injury, although morally and spiritually the harm done is equal in both cases. We are driven, therefore, to the conclusion that the sex of the victim is taken into account, even when it is little more than an infant, and that the subjection of woman begins almost in the cradle!

It is clear that, although we are glad to see any signs of enlightenment on this question in the Courts, the problem will never be effectively or justly approached until women have won true equality with men, and act beside them, on the Bench, in the jury-box, in the penal system, in Parliament.

DR. JOHNSON AND HUMAN LIFE VERSUS PROPERTY

Readers of this journal are well aware of our views on the relative values set on property and human life by the legal minds of this country, as seen in the light sentences given in the Courts for offences against the person and in the heavy sentences given for offences against property. It is therefore interesting to recall that Samuel Johnson shared our views as to this false standard of values. It will be remembered that the Doctor spared no effort to save the life of Dr. Dodd, who was sentenced to death for forgery ("the most dangerous crime in a commercial country," as Boswell terms it), by trying to get the death sentence commuted. When his efforts failed, he wrote the following letter to the condemned man on the eve of his execution by hanging:—

TO THE REVEREND DR. DODD.

"Dear Sir,—That which is appointed to all men is now coming upon you. Outward circumstances, the eyes and the thoughts of men, are below the notice of an immortal being about to stand the trial for eternity, before the Supreme Judge of heaven and earth. Be comforted; your crime, morally or religiously considered, has no very deep dye of turpitude. It corrupted no man's principles; it attacked no man's life. It involved only a temporary and repairable injury. Of this, and of all other sins, you are earnestly to repent; and may God, Who knoweth our frailty and desireth not our death, accept your repentance, for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

"In requital of those well-intended offices which you are pleased so emphatically to acknowledge, let me beg that you make in your devotions one petition for my eternal welfare.—I am, dear Sir, your most affectionate servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

June 28, 1777.

(The italics are ours.) We wish that so enlightened an attitude towards the relative values of human life and property prevailed universally to-day.

"IRISH CITIZEN" FUND

An Appeal to Our Readers

A debt of £200 has been incurred upon the *Irish Citizen*, that gallant little paper which has so bravely upheld the cause of women's freedom in Ireland. The late Mr. Sheehy Skeffington not only gave to it his own valuable services as Editor, but had also recently assumed its financial responsibilities. Everyone who remembers how great a debt women owe to Mr. Sheehy Skeffington will agree that a debt of this kind, incurred in the public service, should not be allowed to remain a claim upon his family. We therefore make an earnest appeal to our readers to send what they can spare towards defraying this debt to Henry W. Nevins, Esq., 4, Downside Crescent, Hampstead, N.W., who is one of those who are collecting for this fund.

FROM THE PRESS

It is not the soldiers and sailors alone who have served the country in the war with heroism and self-sacrifice, and if service in the war is to carry with it the right to vote it would be absurd and indefensible to exclude the whole of the women.—*Manchester Guardian* (July 13).

As for a new Register, it must obviously be prepared in some form or other, and it is equally clear that it cannot include the soldiers and exclude the women. These are the two guide posts, and the Government must follow them.—*The Nation* (July 22).

We are in favour of woman suffrage, but we doubt whether it is wise to plunge into that controversy during the war. Things are mixed already, and it is not well to mix them more.—*The Star* (July 20).

With all that the war has taught us, the old ideas as to women's status and claim to a vote seem absurd. We were told before the war that they could not in justice be given the vote because they could not fight. The answer to this argument is that the whole economic system of Great Britain would have collapsed without their eager and devoted aid. Their energy, their organising power, their capacity for sheer hard work, have put new life into our old and sleepy civilisation. Can this be forgotten? Have not those women who have worked to win the war a claim second only to that of the soldiers?—*Daily Mail, Paris Edition* (July 21).

I happen to know that some members of the Cabinet have been discussing whether the Prime Minister ought not to foreshadow (in the distance) in the next few weeks a scheme of women suffrage when he moves the resolution to add to the life of the present Parliament.—*Sunday Chronicle* (July 16).

Is woman suffrage becoming a question of practical politics? That it is being surveyed by Ministers is certain, and it may be discussed in connection with the Government decision regarding the prolongation of the life of the present Parliament.—*Daily Express* (July 11).

We believe the only remedy for the vast Departmental muddles at Westminster is a general election, in which our fighting men should share, if not those women who have the same franchise qualifications as men.—*East London Observer* (July 15).

I hear that it is quite on the cards that the new Registration Bill will extend the franchise to women possessing certain qualifications. The magnificent way in which British women have rallied to their country's call in its time of need and the unwearied devotion of women war workers to their duties have added powerful new arguments to the already strong case for bestowing the Parliamentary vote on women.—*The People* (June 25).

If any relation were to be allowed between women's work in the war and the possession of the franchise, not only the educated women must have the vote—certainly not only the single or even these in a majority—but the whole of the married, including those who, by common judgment and consent, would be ruled out if political ability were to be a test; for all these have been equally zealous and equally hardworking for the victory we hope to obtain.—*Yorkshire Post* (July 20).

TO FIGHT IGNORANCE

Miss A. Maude Royden writes to draw our attention to the *Shield* (price 6d. quarterly, from the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, 19, Tothill Street, Westminster), as "a source of information" on "the great national danger" of venereal disease.

She continues: "It is edited by Dr. Helen Wilson and Miss Alison Neilans, and is at once sane, scientific, and absolutely sound from a feminist (or rather humanist) point of view. I believe many Suffragists would take it in, if they knew of it, and I do not apologise for pressing it upon their notice because the subject at issue is one which the women of the Woman's Movement have always recognised to be fundamental."

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